





## OLLA PODRIDA.

Some years ago in the Far East, the Soudan or elsewhere, a scientific man travelling took some photographs, and when in a minute or two he showed the negative to a venerable chief, the chief looked pleased and puzzled, and, turning to a confrere, said, "What does he mean? Is he mad? Is he the Devil's child of Satan?" The philosopher laughed; it seemed to him such a quaint and original saying; but not more hardly than did the Judge of the Supreme Court in Sydney at the reply of a witness who was called to testify as to the character of an offender who had committed an offence in liquor. "You know him well?" "Yes, your Honor; I know him well for I am his son." "What is he, then, his son?" "All your Honor." "But when he is drunk?" "Arab, God help us; when he is drunk he is the devil's brother."

Great interest has it said been caused at Folkestone and the neighbourhood by the discovery in the parish church of what are believed to be the remains of St. Edmund, the King of East Anglia, and King of Kent. Some workmen in removing the plaster from a niche in the north wall noticed that the masonry showed signs of having been disturbed at some period, and a further search was made. Taking away a layer of rubble and broken tiles, a cavity was discovered, and in this a battered and corroded leaden casket, oval-shaped, about 18 in. long and 12 in. wide, was found, containing about 15 lbs. of ashes. Within it were human remains, but in such a crumbling condition that the vicar declined to allow them to be touched except by experts. St. Edmund lived early in the seventh century, and was interred, according to historians, in the church on the cliff where she had founded a priory.

A dreadful topic in New York Society, says an American paper, is Mr. Mandel's. His young British wife Mrs. Langton brought to the States to act in her company two seasons ago. He played what is known as a booby part—a bluberry boy—in "A Wife's Part." It was given out that Mr. Mandel was a veritable British aristocrat, his father being a gentleman of Queen Victoria's own household. He brought some introductory letters, and one of New York's prominent publishers, in consequence, at the British boy's ball. He was a good-looking fellow, with a lovely drawl, and the girls took to him at once.

One recent German publication contains a description of a electric plant which has been christened "Phylogen" electrica, which possesses strongly marked electro-magnetic properties. In breaking a wire the hand receives a shock that resembles the sensation produced by an induction coil. Experiments made on this plant showed that a small compass was affected by it at a distance of about 20 feet. On a near approach the needle vibrated, and finally began to revolve quite rapidly. The physician who made the experiments ordered a reading from the plant. The degree of the influence varied with the time of day, being strongest at about two o'clock p.m., and becoming almost nothing during the night. It is also greatly increased in stormy weather, and when it rains the plants seem to wither. It is said that no birds or insects are ever seen or about these plants. The soil where they grow contains no magnetic metal like iron, cobalt, or nickel, and it is evident the plant itself possesses this electrical property.

In an article on Niagara as a Source of Power which appears in a recent number of *Science*, Professor John Trowbridge points out that the cost of long conductors, the maintenance of the insulation, and the interest on the cost of any method of subdivision may be found to offset the advantages of the direct system. Further more, he considers the importance of the plant and the possible accidents to the plant and its distributing elements, which this distance implies, serious drawbacks to the electric lighting of cities by this means. He ascribes the true reason of large sources of water not having been used for electric lighting on a large scale to the fact that small details, and what are called the small items, assume great proportions, and bid fair to consume all profits. This, he thinks, came from a lack of foresight. He believes the city of Buffalo could have been lighted by the utilization of the water power along the Niagara river, and the failure to do so has in his belief been due either to the opposition of the gas companies or to the lack of imagination of capitalists. In short, in Professor Trowbridge's opinion, the difficulties which stand in the way of this can be transposed from place to place, notwithstanding the present cheapness of a very remote source of energy in the shape of a waterfall.

## COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE.

TUESDAY, 8th September, 1885.

Quotations are—  
Malwa (New).....\$500 to \$510 per picul, also, per cent, premium, \$24 to 3 catties.  
Malwa (Old).....\$530 to \$540 per picul, also, per cent, premium, \$34 to 4 catties.  
Patna (New).....\$673 per picul.  
Bunares (Old).....\$614  
Bunares (Old).....\$49 nom. " "

## EXCHANGE.

ON LONDON—  
Telegraphic Transfer.....\$354  
Bank Bills on demand.....\$362  
Bank Bills at 30 days' sight.....\$357  
Bank Bills at 4 months' sight.....\$361  
Credits, at 4 months' sight.....\$364  
Documentary Bills, at 4 months' sight.....\$363  
Bank Bills on demand.....\$364

ON PARIS—  
Bank Bills on demand.....\$440  
Credits, at 4 months' sight.....\$447  
ON NEW YORK—  
Bank Bills on demand.....\$442  
Credits, 60 days' sight.....\$46  
ON BOMBAY—  
Telegraphic Transfer.....\$284  
Bank on demand.....\$284  
ON CALCUTTA—  
Telegraphic Transfer.....\$284  
Bank on demand.....\$284  
ON SHANGHAI—  
Bank at sight.....\$74  
Private, 30 days' sight.....\$74

## SHARES.

Quotations are—  
Hongkong & Shanghai Bank Shares—163 per cent, premium, £100.  
Union Insurance Society of Canton, Limited—\$40 per share.  
China Traders' Insurance Company's Shares—\$64 per share.

North China Insurance—Ths. 300 per share.  
Yangtze River Insurance Association—Ths. 130 per share.  
China Insurance Company, Limited—\$170 per share.  
On Tai Insurance Company, Limited—Ths. 143 per share.

Canton Insurance Office, Limited—\$824 per share.  
Hongkong Fire Insurance Company's Shares—\$367 per share.

China Fire Insurance Company's Shares—\$75 per share.  
Hongkong & Whampoa Dock Company's Shares—55 per cent, premium.

Hongkong Canton and Macao Steamboat Co.'s Shares—\$45 per share premium.

Ito-Choinsa Steam Navigation Co.'s Shares—17 per cent, discount.

China and Manilla Steamship Company, Limited—30 per cent, discount, nominal.

Dong Liang Poem Co., Limited—10 per cent, premium.

Hongkong Gas Company's Shares—\$80 per share.

Hongkong Hotel Company's Shares—\$160 per share.

China Sugar Refining Company, Limited—\$85 per share.

China Sugar Refining Company (Debentures)—1 cent, premium nominal.

Luzon Sugar Refining Company, Limited—\$80 per share.

Hongkong Ice Company's Shares—\$155 per share.

Hongkong and China Bakery Company, Limited—\$118 per share.

Perak Tin Mining and Smelting Company—\$20 per share.

Selangor Tin Mining Company—\$18 per share.

Fork Sugar Cultivation Company—Ths. 12 per share.

Hongkong Rope Manufacturing Company, Limited—\$68 per share.

Hongkong Glass Manufacturing Co., Limited—Par, nominal.

Chinese Imperial Loan of 1884 A—2 per cent premium.  
Chinese Imperial Loan of 1884 B—5 per cent premium.  
Chinese Imperial Loan of 1884 C—5 per cent premium.

**HONGKONG TEMPERATURE.**

(From Messrs. Falconer & Co's Register.) September 8th.

Barometer—84.6 (Mean).....83.5

Barometer—84.5 (Mean).....83

Barometer—84.4 (Mean).....83

Barometer—84.3 (Mean).....80

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## EXTRACT.

## RADED FANCIES.

She read the valentines, 'twas deep and analytic,  
And scored a splendid victory over every writing critic;  
But much I fear logic-learns, and all her moods  
And tenses.

Were lost upon my listening ear and my unapplied sense.  
When she talked of botany, and leaves and grass  
And rushes,

I only saw the roses that mingled in her bushes.  
And when she spoke of history, and turned its lamp-stained pages,

To me it only mystery was just what the dear girl's age is.  
She wandered off on a plus, on cubes and squares  
grown theory;

It set me thinking what might be the figure of her dowry.

So pondering down in the parquet, I set my heart  
To see her;

When she picked up a huge bouquet some other fellow threw her;

Took out a note, blushing—red, smoothed—all its pinky creases.

While over my devoted head my castle went to pieces,  
Providence knew.

## THE RAT.

"Curse we that British vermin, the Rat," says the poet, and many persons would not object to paying, in this instance, for the Sorcerer's "poison curse, one of the cheapest articles in the trade." It's are by no means popular, and even Mr. Frank Buckland could find little to say for them, except that they act as scavengers, and are useful creatures. It must now be added that they are very ingenious, and can give points to the boasted ant, the terror of infantile childhood. A recently published anecdote shows that we should say, "Go to the rat, thou dard," with at least as much conviction as we feel when requesting the sluggish to go to the ant. A gentleman, the world is informed, used to place his newly-laid eggs in the tea-caddy, certainly the last place where, short of thought-reading or inspiration, a person would look for newly-laid eggs. One might as soon expect to find tea in a fishing creel or blacking in the backgammon box. However, the newly-laid eggs thus craftily concealed disappeared, and the servants were suspected. But it was not the servants who were to blame, neither was it the cat—it was the rats. The eggs appeared to vanish automatically. The spirited proprietor of the tea-caddy, however, was reading once late at night, when he heard a mysterious noise proceeding from the receptacle of his favourite eggs. "A weak-minded man would have prayed," to quote a story of an irreverent character, a strong-minded man would have investigated. The egg-owner was strengthened and he marched up to the tea-caddy. He then found that, like the town of Hamelin, it was besieged by rats. Now, it is not an easy thing for a rat to move an egg any distance without breaking it. In their management of this operation the rats displayed their wit. One seized the egg and clasped it to his breast with all four paws. The other rats then seized their friend, and gently lowered him to the ground, where he lay on his back clinging to the egg. Thence they dragged him by the tail to their own place, where, like the greedy boys in "Tom Brown," who stole their neighbour's butter while Tom was fighting Slogger Williams, they "made an unctuous feast." The origin of the rat, like the birth of James Yellowplush, is wrapped up in mystery. The ancients, according to a learned writer quoted by M. Eugene Rolland in his "Panæ Sauvage," knew not the rat. Their condition was more gracious. But it is hard to be certain about the fauna of the ancients. When they use a word meaning mouse they may have had field mouse or common mouse or perhaps even the rat in their minds. Herodotus, an Egyptian authority, the same tale of an army defeated by mice who gnawed their bowstrings, as the Greek Indians tell of rats in their cosmopolitan legends. This legend was fairly written in red, on a skin, and was kept during last century in the Georgia Office. Where is it now? It should be in the Colonial office. The Chinese have precisely the same story, only they, like the Creek Indians, assign the victory to rats, not to the mice of the old Hellenic narrative. Perhaps Herodotus meant rats; he knew nothing about rats till he went to Egypt, and about rats he may have been equally in the dark. Rats are not uncommon in Shakespeare, but Buckland says that Geeson (1587) first mentions the black rat. This, though older than the brown rat, is not apparently indigenous. The Welsh name for rat means "French mouse," and perhaps the rat came over with the Conqueror. An accomplished author on *microscopicæ* thinks the rat was brought to Europe (involuntarily, no doubt) by the Crusaders. The brown so-called "Norway rat" devours the black ones, and are later comers. If a well-known character was really a "rat in Phægros' time," the argument against rats being known to the ancients falls to the ground, and Shakespeare, certainly, thought that rats were common in the heroic age of Denmark. Rats in the Zoological Gardens are a good deal to be pitied. We all know the elephant of the fable. She one day took unwittingly on a partridge, and killed it. Soon afterwards she found the nestlings of the partridge. "Poor little things!" said the elephant; "I too have been a mother," and with the kindest intentions, she sat down on the nest. In the same way, the rhinoceros, never dreaming of harm, has sat down on rats in his house, and compresses them quite flat. Such is their doom—example, as far as it goes, of the ruthless laws of nature, and the survival of the fittest. The instinct of rats teaches them to sit a falling house, but not, alas! to avoid a sleeping rhinoceros. Thus we see how superior is the reason of man to the mere instincts of the lower animals.—*Daily News*.

## A RAILWAY IN THE EAST.

A new railway in a strange land is a curious mixture. Everything is so unsuited to everything else; the ends of the earth are met together in such a perplexing way that the whole thing appears like a bit tumbled out of an extravaganza. Close at hand, an engine stands puffing in a business-like way, ejecting banks which settle, as though quite at home, upon a camel's hump; a stack of sleepers (iron) is being used as a couch by half-a-dozen sleepers (Asiatic men); the unloading of a wagon of Wigan coal is being superintended by a gentleman in a full dress of white turban and string of beads. A station is being erected, upon various doors of which are to be seen the announcements so familiar to us all—"Station Master's Office," "Clock Room," &c.; while a few paces off is a stretch of tangled jungle whose principal inhabitants are some lively tigers, one of which carried off the ticket collector yesterday as he was taking his evening walk. Under the fierce sunshine stretches the lately laid line of rails, fresh from Birmingham, now almost as hot as when they issued first from the furnace, and which possess a trademark representing a polar bear perched on an iceberg. Among such an assemblage of dissimilar parts, we must expect to find strange personages, each a little known of conflicting elements. Behold you half-naked dusky piece of humanity, stretched out and snoring on the floor of the "Station Master's Office." It is that important individual himself, manifested in his pristine form and his natural condition. But in an hour or two, when a train has to be started or received, he will appear on the platform, in rooted tree."

the company's uniform, pocket-book and pencil in hand, ready to afford or deny information, according to the status of the inquirer, with a perfect command of the idiomatic English peculiar to railways, wide awake and sober as a judge, or more so. He can tell you every change along a line hundreds of miles, over fare, and every by-law. And when his daily work is done, he dons everything official or European at the same instant that he doffs his uniform, and retires to his wife and family as complete an Oriental as the smallest and oldest baby among them. But picturesqueness apart, there is no doubt that a railway in such regions is, as Artemus Ward has it, "a sweet boon." It is a delicious relief to loll at something like ease, in even the hottest first-class carriage, after a long drive in a jolting bullock-cart or rattling pony-tonga. There is a dear familiar aspect, to us Europeans, afforded by the paraphernalia of the most outlandish of stations; and the much anathemised steam-whistle is hateful only when we hear it too frequently. I can well remember—with what joy I saw, after a two years' residence in an Indian district innocent of railroads, the long embankments and neat cuttings which indicated the presence of civilisation.—*Bright Days*.

## THE DEADLY UPAS.

The poison of the upas has often been considered to be a myth, and the existence of even the tree itself has been disputed, but the author is not one of the disbelievers in it.

In the centre of the earth is not far from my encampment stood, because no one was willing to cut it down, an immense specimen which had long been a nuisance to the proprietor on account of the lightning every now and then striking off to the damage of the shrubs below large branches, which none of his servants could be induced to move. One day, having been pitchforked together and burned, they were considered disposed of, but next morning the whole of his labourers in the adjacent village awoke, to their intense alarm, afflicted with a painful eruption wherever their bodies were usually uncovered. It was then remembered that the smoke of the burning branches had been blown through the village; this undoubtedly accounted for the epidemic, but did not allay their fears that they were all as dead men, for the potency of the sap is a poison but too well known to them. To prevent a general flight of the workmen, it became necessary to get rid of the tree altogether, but the difficulty was to find any one willing to risk the axe to its roots. At last a couple of Chinamen, after much persuasion and the promise of a high fee, agreed to perform the hazardous task of cutting it up and carrying it away. To the surprise of everybody that accomplished their task without experiencing the least harm. They pocketed their fee and departed in silence, without, however, saying that they had sat at intervals during their work, artfully smearing their bodies with coconut oil. The sap of the bark alone is hurtful, for the logs into which the stripped trunk was cut were made into furniture for the owner's dining room, without the least ill-effects to the carpenters.—*Henry Forbes' "Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago."*

## AN OLD OLD COUNTRY ABOUT WHICH SO LITTLE IS KNOWN.

Mr. S. G. W. Benjamin, United States Minister to Persia, who has recently returned, talked as follows to a reporter:—

"The struggle now going on between England and Russia," he continued, "is very interesting, but of course the United States Government takes no part in deciding which of the two great Powers shall obtain the supremacy in Asia. Germany, it is true, has a legation at Teheran, but merely as interested observers. At the same time they guard the commercial interests of their country just as the legations of Turkey, France, Austria and the United States look after their own."

"Teheran is one of the most interesting cities of the East, not only on account of its antiquity, but because its greater part is comparatively recent growth. It has more shrift than any city I have seen east of Sivriya. Within the last thirty years its population has increased from 80,000 to over 180,000, and thousands of valuable buildings have been erected. The new portions of Teheran are on a par with most European cities, so far as broad, clean and well-ventilated streets are concerned. The Shah is, in my opinion, fully determined to govern his kingdom in the best manner possible under its existing laws, and the thirty-eight years of his reign have been a period of substantial improvement for Persia. A great mistake that most European travellers make is in at once comparing Persia with their own country."

"Those who have formed their impressions from limited observations, speak of Persia as a desolate country, but they have not really seen Persia. The greater part of it lies on a plateau from 4,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea. When one arrives at Rasht, on the Caspian sea, and ascends the wild and lofty mountain passes of El Barz, which tower 13,000 feet above the sea, he is not prepared to find the fertile plain which lies at the foot of the range. Teheran is about ten miles from El Barz. Most of its houses are one-story structures of sun-baked brick, covered with coats of plaster of paris, wrought in beautiful designs, if it must be remembered that the Persians are a nation of architects. There are many large buildings which show a wealth of architectural development, and prove that the people who taught the Moors how to build the wonderful Alhambra have not lost their skill. Water is brought from the mountains by a system of thirty-five underground aqueducts, which while not so imposing in appearance as the ancient Roman structures, still have cost a great deal to build. The introduction of irrigation in the vicinity has increased the growth of vegetation to such an extent as to greatly modify the severity of the warm summer weather. The climate, while very warm, is quite salubrious on account of its dryness."

"The idea that the Persians are a degenerate race is a great mistake. It is not true that they as a nation are in the last stages of corruption and financial powerlessness. They are no worse now than they were 1,500 years ago, so it is easily seen that there has been no degeneration. They have vices, it is true, but they are as bright and intelligent a people as they ever were. As to finances, the fact that Persia has no national debt is a great point in her favour. Then the climate is so mild that men need but little to keep them, and the purchasing power of money is almost threshold what it is in Europe or America. There is no mendacity and but few complaints of poverty. Nearly every man manages to accumulate a little money. Notwithstanding the supposed financial straits of the kingdom, there are many wealthy people who spend great sums on foreign imports. One man recently erected a house in Teheran at a cost of \$1,300,000. Still he is reputed poor and to be always in debt. The Persians, more so than any other Oriental race, are glad to go forward in modern civilization. The chief obstacle to their progress is the Mohammedan priesthood, who also administer the laws, which are all founded on the Koran. They know that the introduction of European laws and customs means the end of their power and they are bitterly opposed to it. Progress must be gradual; rapid, radical changes in such an old monarchy would be as disastrous as received, he will appear on the platform, in rooted tree."

## INTIMATIONS.

CUTLER, PALMER & CO.  
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LATEST AND FULLEST TRADE  
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MELBOURNE CUP RACE OF 1885.

150 Horses ordered! Run about 3rd Nov.

ALL PRIZES! NO BLANKS!

Tenth Annual Sweep of the popular  
AUSTRALIAN TURF CLUB.

Organised 1868.

These Mammoth Drawings are supervised by  
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CAITAN C2000 in 20000 SHARES of

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First Horse £3000.—1 Prize £500. £20000

Second Horse £1500.—1 Prize £300. £20000

Third Horse £1000.—1 Prize £200. £20000

Fourth Horse £1000.—Total £15,000.

Non-Starters divide £1000.

Total £25,000.

The remaining £5,000 will be employed by  
the Club in making up a Book on the Cup and other races, that is laying on taking the odds

and against certain horses, by an entirely  
new method of calculating odds, which was  
first introduced by the Club in 1870.

Non-starters divide over £2,000.

The whole of the profits resulting

therefrom will be given to the Club.

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